Catch the Confetti Game Statement

Catch the Confetti is a simple game, designed by myself using p5.js, with the aim of creating a fun score based activity with code. The aim of the game is to catch the quickly moving ellipse with your mouse. The user is able to keep track of their score whilst they play using the score system in the top left corner of the page. Furthermore, whilst every point you collect is a reward, they also trigger the game to speed up in small increments, thus increasing the difficulty as you go. Lastly, I incorporated a feature that allows users to personalise their experience by using a slider to adjust the colour of the background between white and black depending on the user's preference.

My initial inspiration came from a mock exam presentation given by my classmate in which he used the ellipse feature to make it look like it was snowing on the page. This sparked my interest in trying to do this myself but re-design it for my own project. Using the p5 website and previous lectures, I gained a stronger understanding of the use of colour and how the RGB scale can be creatively incorporated into code. Creating the function for the ellipse to change a random colour on the RGB scale triggered the idea for 'Catch the Confetti'. Another source of inspiration was the widely discussed issue of attention span changing in the younger generation. Many scientists say that with the rise of 'quick dopamine hit' games, like Subway Surf and Candy Crush, that operate on a score-based system are conditioning users to stay hooked for hours. This inspired me to replicate this game model but see if it could be done with a simple level of code, without a complex interface or other overly detailed features. In basic terms, the game is stripping back the complexity of the popular apps without losing the concept of addictive game play.

In relation to the process, I knew from the outset that I wanted to make a game. However, with previous work, lacking a clear idea of the direction made the creating stage much harder. Therefore, knowing the project constraints made it clearer what function to give to my initial idea. I began with creating a code that ensured the size of the screen would fit the user's interface rather than being the standard 400,400 size provided by p5. I also wanted the ellipse to jump around the page at a rate of one-second per frame. Once this ran smoothly, I experimented with the colour each time the ellipse was pressed. At this stage I wasn't trying to hit certain constraints given in the exam, I was focused on making sure that it worked and adding any missing elements after it was initialised. As it is an inclusive game, and I needed to add more constraints into my project so I was sure it would be effective for assessment, I wanted to make it accessible to more. With this, I focused on visibility which, especially with moving objects, can differ from person to person. Being dyslexic myself, I found playing the game was hard on a white background because the colours were less visible as it got faster. To solve this, I added a slider bar that changes the background on a scale from white to black depending on preference.

Based on my initial idea and inspirations, I definitely achieved what I set out to do. The most successful thing that worked was the function that allowed the users to personalise their gaming experience. I found that my composition on the page and experimenting with placement and text was a new tool that I had learnt that also that turned out pleasantly. Furthermore, I had great satisfaction at how smoothly the process from seeing inspiration to executing the idea turned out. By playing the game as I went along I was able to visually break down each part of my code to learn whether it completed its function. This was rewarding and kept me on track to my final outcome while allowing for trouble shooting along the way. The fact that I chose to label each step on my VS code with (//) to make for easy tweaking as I progressed through the project served me well, as I find that if I leave my work for an hour I can forget and stray from my goals. One thing that didn't work and proved complicated was my attempt to make multiple ellipses on the page executing the same job of bouncing around the screen simultaneously, while still working in tandem with the mouse pressed and value sore I created.
This was something that I put on hold intending to return to further down the line, but as the project went on I chose not to rectify the issues which I regret because my work would be a lot stronger with it in. Given the chance, I would implement this in to improve it, not only this but I would also love to have the game tap out after a certain score so the game has an ending purpose and a winning system.

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Write a short statement situating your p5.js project (part A) in a broader social, economic, and technical context. We are looking for between 600-800 words, and encourage you to draw from the lectures, practical exercises, and inspirational work you have encountered in this unit (and across the diploma), alongside your everyday experiences of computing and network use.

To help you write, consider there is no story too small or insignificant as computation can be understood through multiple scales and registers. Those scales can range from the personal act of writing a 'for loop' to the scale of call centers, social media platforms, global migration, or a university education system. Registers to consider might include commentary on technical, aesthetic, economic, race, class, gender, institutional, ethical, or emotional associations of your project – meaning the act of writing and running code can be thought about in more than technical terms.

In your text, we expect you to highlight examples of work that have inspired you, and the ways you have built-on, or leveraged, those ideas in your submitted project. Finally, we expect you to reflect on what has worked, what didn't, what could be improved, and how your project could be extended.

Rough Structure Suggestion (Not set in stone):

Introduction (~ 250 Words) - Introducing what the project is about. Framing and contextualizing the idea.

Inspiration/Examples (150 Words) - Other pieces of work that have inspired you and how have you drawn upon that inspiration and how it connect your work. These could include any text/literature or art/design projects.

Process (~ 200 Words) - The iterative process you followed. How you have taken certain decisions and arrived at the final outcome from your starting point. This might also entail linking your decisions with the project's initial aim and why that was the best choice to achieve the desired outcome.

Reflections (~ 200 Words) - Based on your initial idea and what you set out to do. What worked? What didn't work? And What would you improve? Reflect critically on your work and process.